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WEEKLY VIETNAM INDICATORS

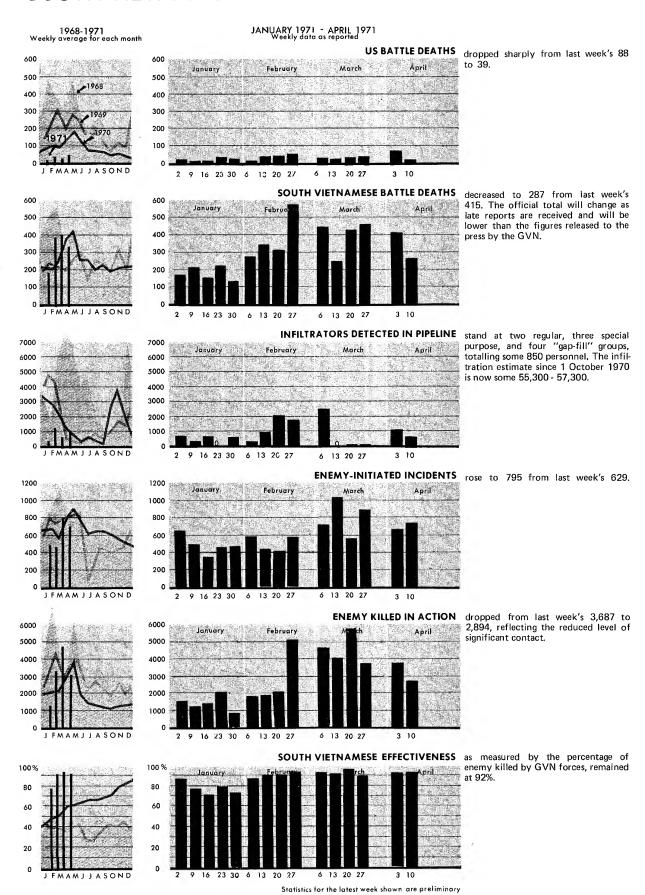
Week Ending 10 April 1971

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SOUTH VIETNAM WEEKLY INDICATORS



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Enemy Activity

Scattered Communist attacks occurred throughout South Vietnam early last week as part of the enemy's "spring campaign" and Hanoi's drive to maintain a crisis atmosphere in the aftermath of the Allied operation into Laos. With the exception of the western highlands, where enemy pressure is continuing, levels of activity have generally tapered off. Enemy communications, however, indicate preparations are in train for phase two of the Communists' spring campaign, with a tentative "open fire date" of 28/29 April. Enemy activity in the Delta region of South Vietnam has remained at a low level. The 11 April sinking of a large North Vietnamese infiltration trawler attempting to deliver supplies to the Delta by sea suggests both that the Communists are experiencing supply shortages in the lower Delta and that Hanoi is making a determined effort to get some degree of needed supplies through to its forces there.

In Cambodia, for the first time in several months the Communists went on the offensive in Kompong Cham Province. Elsewhere in eastern Cambodia, they continued to resist South Vietnamese clearing operations. Meanwhile to the west, after heavy fighting on 7 April, the government task force remains stalled north of the Communist-controlled section of Route 4 near the Pich Nil Pass.

In north Laos, friendly forces are maneuvering to regain positions near the Royal Capital of Luang Prabang lost to the enemy two weeks ago. On the Long Tieng front, fighting centered around the heights between the Sam Thong-Long Tieng base area and the key guerrilla site of Tha Tam Bleung to the northeast, while the Thai and Meo irregulars who abandoned Ban Na have now returned to Long Tieng. In northwestern Sayaboury Province bordering on Thailand, a joint Thai-Lao operation on both sides of the border has run into well-organized enemy resistance. In southern Laos, the main action consisted of scattered engagements on the eastern side of the Bolovens Plateau, where irregulars reinserted into the area earlier this month are meeting heavy resistance.

Enemy Infiltration

Positive detections of infiltrating groups remained at a relatively low level during the past week and totalled only some 842 personnel. Intercepts from southern Laos, however, referred to six groups whose numerical designators indicate that 16 groups have moved through the system in Laos unobserved. Acceptance of these groups, and the "gap-fills" they create, raises the estimate of personnel moving southward to Cambodia/South Vietnam since 1 October 1970 to a total of some 55,300 to 57,300 vice the 49,500 - 51,000 reported last week.

South Vietnam Developments

In a conversation on 7 April, Vice President Ky informed that he had decided to run for the presidency against Thieu and is convinced he can win. Ky said his decision is irrevocable and no pressure from any source could change his mind. Ky alleges that he has pledges for campaign funds in excess of one hundred million piasters (US \$349,000), and that Big Minh will support him if Minh decides not to run. Ky believes that Thieu has chosen Prime Minister Khiem as his running mate, and this may have finalized his decision to run.

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Ky hopes to persuade former Senator Tran Van Don to seek American support for his candidacy during the Senator's visit to the U.S. in late April. Most observers are skeptical of Ky's chances in the presidential sweepstakes, but in a three-way race involving Ky, Thieu, and Big Minh, Ky and Thieu would probably take votes from each other in a way that would work to Minh's advantage.

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